

EPA DEALS DEATH BLOW TO OLD CARS

The EPA dealt a death blow to car collectors and poor and middle-income families, it would appear, with their announcement that the lead content of gasoline will drop to .5 grams of lead per leaded gallon on July 1, 1985, and then to .1 grams on January 1, 1986.

"Not totally so," said Walter R. Haessner, Executive Director of the International Society for VEHICLE Preservation (ISVP). "But it is what EPA would like the public to believe — that the subject is now closed. We still have the opportunity to change EPA's rules, through EPA or through Congress — if EPA becomes deaf to the public's needs."

Haessner, who is the spokesman for ISVP and thus, the car collector hobbists, explained that there will shortly be an announcement regarding lead banking — this will allow refineries and blenders to reduce the amount of lead in a gallon of gas today and put it in a 'bank' to use at a later date — anywhere up to December 31, 1987. Therefore, even in November 1987 you could possibly get gasoline that has as much as .3 grams of lead per leaded gallon.

The purpose of the banking is to allow refineries time for equipment conversion and modification to be able to produce gasoline with a high enough octane number to be able to use as little as .1 grams of lead per leaded gallon.

"This will add to the general confusion of what quality gasoline we'll be buying," Haessner said.

"What we really need is .5 grams of lead per leaded gallon for at least the next five years — so that proper testing can be done to all types of engines under all types of conditions," he continued.

"The major contributing factor to losing the lead battle is the lack of cooperation among the users (farmers, boat owners, motorcycle owners), auto, truck and motorcycle manufacturers, refineries and oil companies, and other interest groups. Of 29 letters ISVP wrote to the above — who had indicated at the August 1984 hearings

their opposition to such drastic lead reduction — only 2 companies even had the courtesy to reply and they were negative as to any general cooperation! The attitude is basically 'public be damned'.

"What is needed is for all those companies and interest groups who want to keep a minimum of .5 grams of TEL per leaded gallon to come in with ISVP so we can work together — like the environmental groups work together . . .

"The reason we have accomplished the gains made to date," Haessner explained, "is the amount of unity the car collectors have exhibited so far . . . all came together to be represented in this by ISVP — the AACA, street-rodders, marque clubs, muscle car groups, swap-meet promoters and more."

ISVP had asked the EPA to include in their rule making a requirement that the petroleum companies be required to post the lead content on the pumps as well as the percentage of methanol or any other alcohol added to increase octane ratings.

The EPA states that this really is the responsibility of each state and should be part of its consumer protection laws.

Haessner went on to say, "Even though we did not get the posting we wanted we did get language into the rule as regards to the possibility of a lead additive to be made available for those vehicles determined to be at risk." This is an extremely important breakthrough — in fact in the new proposal there are at least five items now mentioned that were points Haessner emphasized when he testified for the hobby August 31, 1984 in Washington, DC.

"They are now aware of and concerned about the valve damage that does occur in those engines designed to use lead — and are making public note of it," Haessner explained. He went on to say that ISVP is working with one of the environmental groups to get their backing and understanding of the need for this additive to be made available for those vehicles that will be at risk.

The last letter campaign was a big help — in fact EPA has done its best *not* to release the figures of the actual count of letters received by them on this subject. We've been told by one EPA official that there were over 12,000 letters received. Another EPA person also said that there must be at least 30,000 names on file complaining about the lead removal.

ISVP sent in 1,400 letters it had received and over 8,000 signatures on its petitions. Haessner said that "ISVP would like to hear from anyone who would be willing to act as coordinator to get more petitions signed at swap meets, fairs and club meetings." Interested parties should write: ISVP, Dept. MC, P.O. Box 50046, Tucson, AZ 85703, or call (602) 622-2201.

ARE YOU THE ONE?

Are you an "ACTIVE MEMBER", the kind that would be missed? Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock? Or do you stay at home and criticize and knock?

Do you take an active part to help the work along? Or are you satisfied to be the person who "JUST BELONGS"?

Do you work on committees? To do this is no trick. Or leave the work to just a few and talk about the "clique"?

There's quite a program scheduled that I'm sure you've heard about, and we'll all appreciate it, if you'll come and help out.

So come to the meetings often and help with hand and heart. Don't be JUST A MEMBER, but take an ACTIVE part.

Think it over, member, you know right from wrong. Are you an "ACTIVE MEMBER"? Or do you just belong?

Jim Mossman